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CONSUMER TIME

THE STORY OF MARKET NEWS

NETWORK: NBC

DATE: August 24, 1946

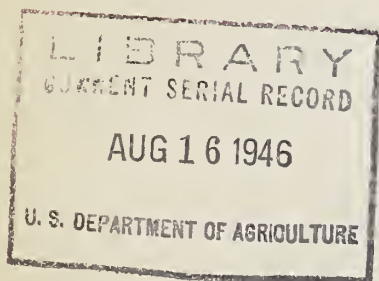
ORIGIN: WRC -- PICKUP FROM LOS ANGELES

TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM EDT

(Produced by the United States Department of Agriculture  
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CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the  
program...presented for more than thirteen years in the  
interest of consumers.)

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL
2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER
4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National  
Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent  
stations make their facilities available for the  
presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U. S. Department  
of Agriculture.
5. JOHN: And this is Johnny with a preview of this edition of  
CONSUMER TIME. Today we're going to visit the wholesale  
fruit and vegetable market at Los Angeles, California.  
Mrs. Freyman will talk with the U. S. Department of  
Agriculture's market news man...to find out just  
what goes on in one of the country's biggest terminal  
markets...and how market reports are gathered to help  
you, the consumer.... And at the Washington, D. C.  
end of the mike, we have a guest from the U. S.  
Department of Agriculture, Fred B. Northrup,  
Special Assistant to the Head of the Production and  
Marketing Administration. <sup>Mr. Northrup,</sup> I understand that you're  
the man who has the over-all responsibility for  
market news in the United States. So before we  
switch to Mrs. Freyman in Los Angeles, suppose you  
tell us something about market news.





6. NORTHROP: Well, Johnny, marketing is a very complicated system... as Mrs. Freyman is probably finding out now at the Los Angeles wholesale market. The refrigerator car brings food to vast new markets...far from the producing areas. The problem, is how to supply every market with enough of the right foods at the right time.
7. JOHN: And that's where market news comes in?
8. NORTHROP: Exactly. Market news means just what its name implies. It's news of the prices, and usually the supply and demand, of the foods coming into a large central market. Market news helps avoid distribution problems because it gives a complete picture of the markets so the farmer and the shipper can decide when and where they want to send their produce.
9. JOHN: Well...how about the consumer and market news?
10. NORTHROP: It definitely helps her, Johnny.... Some markets may be oversupplied with fruits and vegetables...selling at disastrously low prices for the farmers. But another market might have little or none of these items...and of course they'd be selling at high prices. Market news helps keep the balance.
11. ENGINEER: WATCH SWITCH COMING UP AT 12:17 EDT: CUE IS UNDERLINED.
12. JOHN: Well just how is market news collected, Mr. Northrup?
13. NORTHROP: The U. S. Department of Agriculture has market news reporters in all parts of the country...men who get the facts...the facts that may influence what many homemakers are going to serve for dinner tonight or next week. Mr. A. E. Prugh is our fruit and vegetable market news reporter in Los Angeles.



14. JOHN: Then let's turn the microphone over for a while to Mrs. Freyman and Mr. Prugh in Los Angeles for an on the spot report from that big wholesale fruit and vegetable market. CONSUMER TIME takes you to Los Angeles, California.
15. SWITCH TO LOS ANGELES 8:17 PST
16. FREYMAN: This is Mrs. Freyman in Los Angeles, California...and friends, it certainly is thrilling seeing the West Coast for the first time. And one of the most interesting parts of my trip is this visit to the wholesale fruit and vegetable market here in Los Angeles. We have a special microphone set up. The noises you hear in the background are real. They're actually the market in full swing....Now I want you all to meet Mr. A. E. Prugh, who keeps track of what goes on at this great market for the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Prugh, I don't believe I've ever seen so many fresh fruits and vegetables in my life as there are here today.
17. PRUGH: Well, Mrs. Freyman, you're just seeing the proof that Los Angeles is situated in one of the greatest producing areas in the country. In fact every person listening to this program eats food that was grown within a few miles from where we're standing.
18. FREYMAN: I can believe that, Mr. Prugh...all these trucks rolling in piled high with crates of oranges...lettuce...cantaloupes...just to mention a few items.
19. PRUGH; More truckloads of produce roll into Los Angeles than in any other market...including New York.



20. FREYMAN: But it's still so early in the morning...not even eight -thirty yet.
21. PRUGH: As a matter of fact, trucks have been arriving and unloading all night. Most of the grocers and food distributors come down to the market 'way before breakfast...as early as four and five a.m. Actually trading is practically over by this time.
22. FREYMAN: It certainly is a busy place. As market news reporter, what part of the market do you cover, Mr. Prugh?
23. PRUGH: All of it...which includes three wholesale markets.
24. FREYMAN: All of it! Isn't that a pretty big order? What time do you get down here every morning, anyway?
25. PRUGH; I'm on hand an hour before trading starts.
26. FREYMAN: Goodness...you said before that was somewhere around four or five a.m. Talk about early birds.
27. PRUGH: Well, in order for my report on the market to be of any use to anybody, it must be timely. So by this time every weekday morning, I'm usually back in the office editing my notes, before the report goes out. The unofficial slogan for us market news reporters is "Get the market...get it right...get it out."
28. FREYMAN: That's a good slogan for any kind of reporting job. But Mr. Prugh, with so much going on here at the market... just how do you make sense out of it all and how do you get your information?

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29. PRUGH: By interviewing the buyers and sellers....and inspecting market records. From all these we make up the reports and we try to make them as complete as possible. Incomplete or inaccurate reports are dangerous. We've got to know everything that's going on before we can figure out whether the day's prices for, say, lettuce, are higher...lower...or the same as they were the day before. Just quoting the top price...that's the highest...may not be a fair measure of the market. That price may have been for lettuce of exceptional quality.
30. FREYMAN: Oh...so quality enters into market news too?
31. PRUGH: Very definitely. Market news men report on quality... and they use the same descriptions of quality to mean the same things...all over the country.
32. FREYMAN: You mean that U. S. number one potatoes would mean the same quality potatoes here as it would mean back in Washington, D. C.
33. PRUGH: Or in Chicago, or Dallas, or anywhere in the United States, allowing for differences in the variety of potato.
34. FREYMAN: Well, I can see how that would be helpful to anyone concerned with the buying or selling of food...either wholesale or retail. Tell me, Mr. Prugh, do you do the shopping for your wife in your time off?
35. PRUGH: Well...I....
36. FREYMAN: Never mind. You really don't have to answer that. I was just thinking that after so many years covering produce markets...how many years is it now?



37. PRUGH: Twenty-three years.
38. FREYMAN: Well, I was thinking that after so many years of working with fresh produce, you'd be a mighty good judge of fruits and vegetables.
39. PRUGH: Well, I suppose I should be. In fact, a market news reporter has to be a commodity specialist before he gets the job. He has to know about fruits and vegetables...the different varieties...how and where they are grown,...how they are harvested...and how they are packed and shipped.
40. FREYMAN: Well...that only confirms my belief that you'd make a wonderful shopping guide.
41. PRUGH: I will admit, Mrs. Freyman, that after ten years on the Los Angeles market, I have gotten to know some of the unusual commodities that are grown exclusively in southern California...but are shipped all over the nation.
42. FREYMAN: Such as what, Mr. Prugh?
43. PRUGH: Well, for instance, have you ever had any chayotes, Mrs. Freyman?
44. FREYMAN: Uh uh. Can't say that I have. I know this is the obvious thing to say, Mr. Prugh, but they sound like coyotes to me.
45. PRUGH: They're really a vegetable. You'd cook them the way you do squash. Loquats may be another one that's new to you.
46. FREYMAN: Indeed it is. Is a loquat any relation to a kumquat, Mr. Prugh?



47. PRUGH: No, a loquat is a small pear-shaped fruit with a yellow skin. It makes a wonderful jelly. But a kumquat is a member of the citrus family. It's shaped like an olive and has a golden orange color. Kumquat marmalade is quite a delicacy.
48. FREYMAN: Well that is interesting and all new to me. Are there any other unusual fruits or vegetables that are sold especially on the Los Angeles wholesale market?
49. PRUGH: Well, there's napa, commonly known as Chinese cabbage. You can use it in a salad or cook it like ordinary cabbage. Then there are cherimoyas, sapotes, guavas, mangoes, passion fruit, tomatillos, and Jerusalem artichokes. It also might interest you to know that persimmons which we hear so much about as growing wild in the south are grown commercially out here.
50. FREYMAN: Some of these fruits you've been describing sound very exotic and very tempting, Mr. Prugh.
51. PRUGH: After the broadcast, we'll see if we can't round up some of them and let you have a taste.
52. FREYMAN: Wonderful. But now...let's get back to the business side of market news. I was wondering what you do with your daily report of the market.
53. PRUGH: Well, it goes out over the California State Radio Service and the U. S. Department of Agriculture's leased teletype wire, to our permanent market news offices and many of the seasonal offices. I think you can see how well the market news offices are linked when I tell you the Government leases over eight thousand miles of teletype wire, just for market news.



54. FREYMAN: Eight thousand miles...that really should cover the whole country.
55. PRUGH: It does. And then there's an early morning report from Washington everyday. It shows all the important commodities shipped by rail and which States they came from during the previous twenty-four hours up to midnight.
56. FREYMAN: So each market news office knows what's moving in other sections of the country.
57. PRUGH: Exactly. During the day there is a constant flow and exchange of information between all the offices. That makes it possible for every office to mail out a daily report which covers not only the local market situation ...but information from other shipping areas and markets that are of local interest to shippers and growers.
58. FREYMAN: Then market news is sent around the country by teletype and mail.
59. PRUGH: Oh there are quite a few more ways of getting market news reports to the people who need them.
60. FREYMAN: For instance.
61. PRUGH: We send summaries of the daily reports to the newspapers and press associations. Every year market news offices mail about ten million reports...just on fruits and vegetables. And of course radio is probably one of the most effective ways of spreading market news...because of its speed. Then each local office provides a kind of "Information Please" every day....
62. FREYMAN: You mean you answer the questions of people who call in?



63. PRUGH: That's right. We're a general clearing house of information on marketing.
64. FREYMAN: Then it looks like you use every means of communications to send market news around the country...teletype, mail, newspapers, radio, and telephone.
65. PRUGH: Even bulletin boards. Yes, Mrs. Freyman, I think it's safe to say that it's possible for almost every interested person to get market news...one way or another. And market news is all free.
66. FREYMAN: Well, it certainly sounds like a pretty complete system to me, Mr. Prugh.
67. PRUGH: No other industry can boast of having such a complete picture available of the daily movement of its commodities. California especially needs this market news because it ships around a third of all the fruits and vegetables grown in the United States.
68. FREYMAN: I can see that all this information on the wholesale markets is pretty important to our complicated system of marketing. But, Mr. Prugh, I wonder if you could explain a little more just how market news helps the homemaker.
69. PRUGH: Well, Mrs. Freyman, if it's okay with you, I'll answer that question by asking you another. How do you usually prepare your own personal marketing list...when you're back in Washington, D. C.?
70. FREYMAN: Well...I look over what food I've got in the house. Then I know what I need. You're not getting around to telling me I should read the market news reports, are you, Mr. Prugh?



71. PRUGH: Not exactly. I don't think you'd be interested in how many carloads of potatoes are rolling into your city on a certain day. And the wholesale price of potatoes doesn't help you figure whether they can be included on your food budget.
72. FREYMAN: I should say not. We eat a lot of food at my house... but when it comes to carloads....
73. PRUGH: But you do like to know what fruits and vegetables are plentiful, don't you?
74. FREYMAN: Naturally...I know that those are the ones that are likely to be the best buys. That's why I listen to the radio and read the newspapers. Women commentators... and the women's page of the paper...usually give tips on what's what in the way of fruits and vegetables.
75. PRUGH: Well, behind those food tips you read in the papers and hear on the radio, is the work of the market reporter. His information helps the farmer and shipper bring his produce to the right market at the right time...so that you and every other consumer can buy the seasonable fresh fruit and vegetables you want...when you want them.
76. ENGINEER: WATCH SWITCH COMING UP AT 12:25:37 SEC. EDT (8:25:37 SEC. PST). CUE IS UNDERLINED.
77. FREYMAN: I think that's a clear cut picture of just what role market news on fruits and vegetables plays in our daily lives! Thank you very much, Mr. A. E. Prugh, for playing host to CONSUMER TIME today at the Los Angeles wholesale fruit and vegetable market. This is Mrs. Freyman returning you to CONSUMER TIME in Washington, D. C.



78. SWITCH TO WASHINGTON, D. C. 8:25:37 SEC. PST
79. JOHN: This is Johnny again, in Washington, D. C., with our guest, Fred B. Northrup, Special Assistant to the Head of the Production and Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture....Well, Mr. Northrup, I feel as if I know a little bit more about fruit and vegetable marketing now. And I certainly am impressed with how fast market news is collected and sent around the country to help producers and consumers.
80. NORTHROP: The important thing about our market news is its accuracy. The sales, supplies, and market conditions are reported honestly. The market reports are factual and unbiased. They don't favor the buyer or the seller ...because they're issued by a totally disinterested party...the U. S. Department of Agriculture.
81. JOHN: And that certainly is important. Incidentally, Mr. Northrup, how long have we had this market news service?
82. NORTHROP: The first report was issued back in 1915...on strawberries at Hammond, Louisiana. From that beginning market news has grown to become an indispensable factor in the American system of marketing farm products.
83. JOHN: I gathered there are market news offices in many of the large central markets around the country.
84. NORTHROP: Yes, there are twenty-two fruit and vegetable market news offices that operate the year round. And then there are about forty temporary offices that are maintained during local marketing seasons. The reports from all of these offices cover as many as one hundred different kinds of fruits and vegetables.



85. JOHN: Let's go back to those temporary field offices for a minute. Could you explain a little more about them, Mr. Northrup?
86. NORTHRUP: Well, Johnny, take peaches for instance. They make a good timely example. When an important crop like peaches starts moving to market, we set up a temporary office to report on the marketing conditions.
87. JOHN: Then I guess you have a temporary market news office in full swing in the South right now.
88. NORTHRUP: As a matter of fact, the market news men have been following the peach crop north. When the first peaches began to be shipped from the deep South...we had an office at Macon, Georgia. The next big peach center to start shipping was in the Carolinas.
89. JOHN: Sounds like market news news men are sent where they can do the most good.
90. NORTHRUP: Yes indeed. Our market news men were on hand when peaches were marketed in North Carolina, Arkansas... and Illinois. Right now they are in Michigan, New York State, and Colorado.
91. JOHN: That certainly must be a big help to peach growers and shippers.
92. NORTHRUP: Yes it is...and there's a similar service for crops like potatoes, cabbage, cantaloupes, tomatoes, watermelons... and many more.
93. JOHN: Mr. Northrup, up to this time, we've been talking about market news covering fruits and vegetables. How about all the other farm products?



94.     NORTHRUP:     There's a long list, Johnny...cotton, dairy and poultry products, grain, feed, hay,...as well as livestock, meat, wool, and tobacco. That just about covers them.
95.     JOHN:         Well, Mr. Northrup, market news certainly plays an important role in our complicated system of marketing.
96.     NCRTHRUP:     It certainly does. Market news helps the producers and buyers know what and how much the other has to offer. When the farmer or shipper receives a full report on the markets, he can figure out where to ship his produce to his best advantage. And as Mr. Prugh in Los Angeles pointed out, market news helps make it possible for consumers to buy the fruits and vegetables they want...when they want them.
97.     JOHN:         Thank you Mr. Northrup for being with us today, ...and supplying some of the background information on just what goes on before fruits and vegetables find their way to our retail stores....I hope you'll be listening in next Saturday when Mrs. Freyman is back in Washington, D. C. for our CONSUMER TIME broadcast. We're going to take advantage of all we've learned about market news...and find out just what fruits and vegetables are plentiful now all over the country. And I'm sure Mrs. Freyman will have some interesting tips on special ways to fix these plentiful foods. So friends, be with us next Saturday for our fruit and vegetable round up on



98. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.
99. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME.
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101. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Miller, and  
directed by \_\_\_\_\_, is presented by the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities  
of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated  
independent stations. It comes to you from  
Washington, D. C.

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